

Thursday, March 18, 2004

Vol. 4, No. 20

Launch Pad for Gravity Probe B preparing for liftoff April 17



Advance tickets are best bargain for All-American Picnic

▲ Gravity Probe B Update: After each solar array is installed, a “walk-out test,” or unfolding, is performed to ensure the array deploys properly. Final installation is today. A detailed data analysis of the reworked Experiment Control Unit confirms the ECU is performing as desired. Small ordnance has been installed inside the Forward Equipment Enclosure (FEE). The FEE surrounds the electronics of the Science Mission Dewar, which has valves that are opened on-orbit by the pyrotechnics to equalize pressure.

At pad SLC-2, Vandenberg AFB, the rocket is enclosed in the mobile service tower and is powered up. A countdown test with the first stage loaded with liquid oxygen occurs today. A simulated Flight test is scheduled for March 24. The Launch Site Readiness Review is scheduled for March 30.

▲ Get tickets for All-American Picnic: Advance tickets for the annual KSC All-American Picnic are \$5 per adult and \$3.50 per child ages 3 to 12. Prices at the gate increase to \$7 and \$5 respectively. Tickets are on sale at the HQ, O&C and



SSPF buildings, and OSB Sundry stores, CCAFS Hangar I Annex Room 204 and the KARS Country Store. Tickets will also be sold March 25 and 26 at HQ, SSPF, OSB, and O&C cafeterias. Go to the Picnic Web site at <http://kscpicnic.ksc.nasa.gov/> for information about activities, exhibits and entertainment, location of food sites, and more. Check out the map to see the layout of the picnic grounds and locations of parking areas.

◆ Reminder – Monday, March 22, is the deadline to

submit your ideas for the Spaceport Super Safety and Health Day slogan! The winning slogan will be used for advertisements, posters and giveaways. All participants will receive a token of appreciation. The winner will be acknowledged during the event Oct. 28. Submit your inputs to Bob Geron, YA-B, or send e-mail to Robert.A.Geron@nasa.gov.

◆ NASA Science – Tumbleweed rover goes on a roll at Greenland. A balloon-shaped robot explorer, which one day could search for evidence that water existed on other planets, was recently deployed in Greenland, where it completed a more than 100-km autonomous traverse across an ice sheet. Communicating via the Iridium satellite network, the rover in question successfully and reliably relayed live GPS, temperature and pressure data to a ground station at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory for nearly 10 days. A follow-on rover is planned for a traverse from the South Pole to the coast of Antarctica some 2,000km away. Visit the Web site at <http://robotics.jpl.nasa.gov/~behar/southpoletw.htm> for more information on the Tumbleweed rover.

◆ Looking for a planet? The Jet Propulsion Lab Web site <http://photojournal.jpl.nasa.gov/index.html> shows a brilliant map of the planets and lists many links to the solar system, stars and galaxy, spacecraft and telescopes, technology, history and more.

◆ Did You Know? Joan Deming, the co-principal and vice president of Archaeological Consultants, Inc., in Sarasota, is the guest speaker at the Environmental and Energy Awareness Week opening ceremony taking place at 10 a.m. April 20 in the KSC Training Auditorium. Deming has more than 27 years of cultural resource management experience in Florida. She has managed all of ACI's work on behalf of NASA-KSC and for the U.S. Air Force at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.